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Dutiya Dhāraṇa Sutta

The 2nd Discourse on Remembering | S 56.16
 Theme: Rightly remembering the 4 noble truths
 Translated by Piya Tan ©2018

1 Sutta significance

1.1 The Dutiya Dhāraṇa Sutta (S 56.16), “the 2nd discourse on remembering,” is about remembering the 4 noble truths correctly, without confusing them with later or outside teachings. We should then reflect on them as the basis for wisdom leading to the path of awakening.

1.1 A closely related text is **the Paṭhama Dhāraṇa Sutta** (S 56.15), “the 1st discourse on remembering,” a brief sutta on correctly recalling the 4 noble truths, and reflecting on them. Further, we can say that we should not only remember these 4 truths, but we should also constantly reflect on them as the basis for wisdom leading to the path of awakening.

1.3 TRUTH SEQUENCE. The commonly known sequence of the 4 noble truths—as (1) suffering, (2) arising (craving), (3) ending (nirvana) and (4) the path (the noble eightfold path)—is **the teaching model**, used in explaining to beginners and the unawakened on the nature of the truths. It is also called the “Dhamma,-cakka” sequence (SD1.1), which is familiarly listed as “**1-2-3-4**” in **the Dhamma,cakka Pavattana Sutta** (S 56.11), thus,

suffering → arising → ending → path. (S 56.11,5-8) + SD 1.1 (6.2.2.2)

It is not, however, the only truth model. An older model, **the practice model**, arranges the truths as 1-2-4-3. This model is found, for example, in **the Mahā Saḷ-āyatanika Sutta** (M 140), SD 41.9; hence, it is also called the Mahā Saḷ-āyatanika sequence.

The oldest truth model, however, is clearly the one that the Buddha states that he himself had realized awakening with, that is, the sequence 1-4-2-3, also called the Sela sequence, since it is found in **the Sela Sutta** (M 92 = Sn 558)m SD 45a.7.¹

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Dutiya Dhāraṇa Sutta

The 2nd Discourse on Remembering

S 56.16

- 1 “Bhikshus, do you remember **the 4 noble truths** taught by me?”²
- 2 When this was said, a certain monk said to the Blessed One:
 “I remember, bhante, the 4 noble truths taught by the Blessed One.”

¹ For details on these truth sequences, see SD 53.26 (2).

² *Dhāretha no tumhe bhikkhave mayā cattāri ariya,saccāni desitānīti.*

3 “But how, bhikshu, do you remember *the 4 noble truths* taught by me?” [428]

4 THE 4 NOBLE TRUTHS

(1) “Bhante, I recall **suffering** as the 1st noble truth taught by the Blessed One.

Bhante, should any recluse or brahmin speak thus:

‘This is not *the suffering as the 1st noble truth* that is taught by the recluse Gotama.³

Having rejected this *1st noble truth that is suffering*, I will declare another *1st noble truth that is suffering!*—this is impossible.⁴

(2) Bhante, I recall **the arising** of suffering as the 2nd noble truth taught by the Blessed One.

Bhante, should any recluse or brahmin speak thus:

‘This is not *the arising of suffering that is the 2nd noble truth* that is taught by the recluse Gotama.

Having rejected this *2nd noble truth that is the arising of suffering*, I will declare another *2nd noble truth that is the arising of suffering!*—this is impossible.

(3) Bhante, I recall **the ending** of suffering as the 3rd noble truth taught by the Blessed One.

Bhante, should any recluse or brahmin speak thus:

‘This is not *the ending of suffering that is the 3rd noble truth* that is taught by the recluse Gotama.

Having rejected this *3rd noble truth that is the ending of suffering*, I will declare another *3rd noble truth that is the ending of suffering!*—this is impossible.

(4) Bhante, I recall **the path** leading to the ending of suffering as the 4th noble truth taught by the Blessed One.

Bhante, should any recluse or brahmin speak thus:

‘This is not *the path leading to the ending of suffering that is the 4th noble truth* that is taught by the recluse Gotama.

Having rejected this *4th noble truth that is the path leading to the ending of suffering*, I will declare another *4th noble truth that is the path leading to the ending of suffering!*—this is impossible.

Thus, bhante, do I remember the 4 noble truths taught by the Blessed One.”

5 “Sadhu! Sadhu! Bhikshu, you do remember the 4 noble truths taught by me.”

(1) “Indeed, bhikshu, **suffering** is the 1st noble truth that I have taught: remember it thus!

Bhikshu, should any recluse or brahmin speak thus:

‘This is not *the suffering as 1st noble truth* that is taught by the recluse Gotama.

Having rejected this *1st noble truth that is suffering*, I will declare another *1st noble truth that is suffering!*—this is impossible.

(2) Bhikshu, **the arising** of suffering is the 2nd noble truth that I have taught.

Bhikshu, should any recluse or brahmin speak thus:

‘This is not *the arising of suffering that is the 2nd noble truth* that is taught by the recluse Gotama.

³ *N’etaṃ dukkhaṃ paṭhamaṃ ariyasaccaṃ [Be Se yaṃ] samañena gotamena desitaṃ.*

⁴ *Ahaṃ etaṃ dukkhaṃ paṭhamaṃ ariya, saccam paccakkhāya aññāṃ dukkhaṃ paṭhamaṃ ariya, saccam paññāpessāmīti nētaṃ thānaṃ vijjati.*

Having rejected this 2nd noble truth that is the arising of suffering, I will declare another 2nd noble truth that is the arising of suffering!—this is impossible.

(3) Bhikshu, **the ending** of suffering is the 3rd noble truth that I have taught.

Bhikshu, should any recluse or brahmin speak thus:

‘This is not the ending of suffering that is the 3rd noble truth that is taught by the recluse Gotama.

Having rejected this 3rd noble truth that is the ending of suffering, I will declare another 3rd noble truth that is the ending of suffering!—this is impossible.

(4) Bhikshu, **the path** leading to the ending of suffering is the 4th noble truth I have taught.

Bhikshu, should any recluse or brahmin speak thus: [429]

‘This is not the path leading to the ending of suffering that is the 4th noble truth that is taught by the recluse Gotama.

Having rejected this 4th noble truth that is the path leading to the ending of suffering, I will declare another 4th noble truth that is the path leading to the ending of suffering!—this is impossible.

Thus, indeed, bhikshu, remember the 4 noble truths as taught by me.

6 Therefore, bhikshus,

You should devote yourself (to the reflection):⁵ “This is suffering.”

You should devote yourself (to the reflection): “This is the arising of suffering.”

You should devote yourself (to the reflection): “This is the ending of suffering.”

You should devote yourself (to the reflection): “This is the path leading to the ending of suffering.”

— evaṃ —

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⁵ *Idaṃ dukkhan’ti yogo karaṇīyo.*